

# ELIMINATION OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT FOR 12 MILLION CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about that sleight of hand that happened in the last few days when the Republicans put together the newest tax cut for the American people. At the time, they decided to eliminate the child tax credit for 12 million children here in the United States, because, of course, they had to find a way to pay for their tax cut for dividend earnings. One would say, so what? It is just 12 million children that we are not going to give the tax credit to their families for. But it was 12 million children of low-income families. That means that if they made somewhere between \$10,000 and \$26,000 as a family they would not get that child tax credit. People tell me all the time there is no possibility. They just cannot make \$10,000 a year because \$10,000 a year, they cannot live on that. Darn right. They cannot live on \$10,000 a year.

Let us look at what it takes to live when they are making minimum wage, minimum wage in Orange County, California, where I live. Let us say they live in Santa Ana and they are making minimum wage, and there are a lot of people who make minimum wage out there. Why? We have got Disneyland; we have got tourist attractions there. We have got the maids who make the bed when they come and stay in Anaheim. The dishwashers, the people who serve. We have the gardeners who are cleaning up everything, the janitors. They all make minimum wage; and they make no benefits, most of them.

So minimum wage, and in California it is higher than the rest of the Nation. Our minimum wage is \$6.15 an hour. Multiply that if they are going to work for 2,040 hours a week. That is working every week. That comes to less than \$13,000 a year. But by the time just their payroll taxes get pulled out of that paycheck, they are taking home about \$11,000. And let us say that they are a family of three, that they have got a child, that they go home to live in their one-bedroom rented apartment in Santa Ana, California, where the average rent is \$950 a month. When they do all the math, they figure out that earning minimum wage means they can barely pay their apartment rent. That is not their utilities. It is not health care. It is not clothes for them or their children. It is not school books or supplies. It is not transportation to get to their job, and it is not food. It is not medicine. So, yes, it is very difficult to live on minimum wage where I live, but a lot of people do it. They are working hard every single day.

I remember about a year ago we unionized our janitors there, and they had a contract that would pay \$6.40 an

hour. And the workers came to put in their bid of whether they were going to accept that contract or not, \$6.40 an hour for cleaning toilets, cleaning toilet after toilet after toilet in a high-rise all night long every floor. Who do the Members think cleans those buildings? And they were voting on this, \$6.40 an hour. That was the contract. One holiday a year and 5 sick days a year. There was this guy, this older gentleman who was crying as he put in his "yes" vote, and he said to me "You know, Congresswoman, I have been a janitor here for 17 years. This is the first time that I will get a raise."

People live and they work very hard for these wages. So I hear the other side say it does not matter; we should not give people this tax credit. We need to give people that tax credit. What about the 200,000 families that are in our military, some of them stationed in Iraq, having put their lives on the line who are not eligible for the child tax credit because the other side decided that they needed to give rich people more money? When we first discovered it and we started to talk about it, some said, oh, my God, we did not know. How could that happen? Someone just slipped it in. Nobody slipped it in. The White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer said it was a very well-known fact what they were doing and the White House knew about it.

Let us pass the DeLauro bill. We have got to get money to the families who really need it.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would ask the occupants of the gallery not to show signs of approval or disapproval.

## PROTECTING THE UNITED STATES AND ITS CITIZENS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, most Americans believe that the first duty of the Federal Government is to protect the security of the United States and its citizens. By any objective assessment, when the threat to our security takes a form of foreign armies, navies or intercontinental missiles, we have done an exemplary job. When it comes to threats confronting us, new threats, the sort that resulted in the attacks like that on September 11, we continue to ignore gaping holes in our national defense. As it becomes more evident that we need better information about who is in our country, we are about to surrender that identification process to foreign governments. We must adhere to a policy of closed borders with open, guarded doors. We cannot rely on for-

eign nations, even allies, to be thorough enough to issue identification that meets our rigorous standards. Do we really want to rely on the government of Mexico and the dozens of other countries that will be lining up to issue consular IDs to tell us who is living illegally in our country? I think not. The majority of Americans believe that we should not either.

Given the very real and deadly threats that we face, how wise is it to have millions of Americans, people living illegally in this country using dozens of identity documents issued by governments all around the globe to do everything from opening a bank account to boarding planes. I have recently been informed that our customs office in New York is actually allowing customs forms as people enter into this country to be turned in and they are simultaneously not checking the names of the people turning in the customs forms to compare it to a list of known terrorists. Customs forms pile up and are entered several days later. This is later when these people are already in our country. It is kind of the "come on in and we will check you later" process, that "we will check you later if we can find you." Is this what we really had in mind when we promised the American people that we would do everything within reason to prevent another catastrophe like 9-11 and we spent billions of tax dollars to create a Department of Homeland Security? I do not think so, Mr. Speaker; and I do not think our American citizens do either.

## TAX CUT TO WORKING FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) for her eloquent statement on behalf of the people who are left out of the Republican tax cut bill and the people who like the Narvaez family in my district are working hard every single day. This is Maria Narvaez and her daughters Alma and Elia. She has another daughter too. She is standing in front of a community organization called Family Matters in my district and all of us would hope that to every Member of Congress that families really do matter.

To Ms. Narvaez, they really do. She works also in a day care center taking care of other people's children, and for all of her full-time work she earns \$20,000. When the tax cut bill passed the Senate originally, it had a refundable tax credit. She would have gotten up to another \$400, which may not mean much to some people, but could mean a lot to Maria and her daughters and her son, who are pictured there. She would have taken that money and